

The age tax is astronomical. The CBO said that a senior at the age of 60, making about \$26,000, would have to pay about \$14,000 in premiums. That is nearly half of their income, leaving very little for food and housing and their other needs.

This bill also will make it harder for doctors and hospitals to care for patients, due to the Medicaid block granting and the cuts. That is why the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the AARP, and many major provider organizations oppose this bill, because they also know firsthand the harm it would cause to patients. That is why AARP opposes this bill, because they know the harm it is going to cause to the elderly in our Nation.

Now, do PAUL RYAN and President Trump really know more about patient care and providing care than doctors, nurses, and hospitals? Do they know more about taking care of seniors than the AARP? No. We need to end this hyperpartisan, ideological charade that puts the cost of health care on the shoulders of working families in order to give tax breaks to multimillionaires. We need to come together as one body to provide true health care, reduce the healthcare costs for millions of Americans, and provide the care that is needed.

REPEALING OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, 7 years ago this week, in this Chamber, the House gave final passage to the Affordable Care Act, better known as ObamaCare.

I wasn't in Congress then. Many of us weren't. But for my fellow conservatives here today, that vote 7 years ago marked a decision point, or a moment of affirmation, to answer the call to public service and to help chart a better way for this country.

And for 7 years, we have made the case against ObamaCare. As the law has been implemented, that case has been largely made for us. Millions have been forced away from the healthcare plan and doctor they liked, despite being told otherwise.

This year alone, in Alabama, health insurance premiums are rising by 58 percent. That is on top of the already steep increases the past 2 years. Our average deductible for the supposedly affordable bronze plan is now \$6,000.

I have heard from countless constituents about the negative impact of ObamaCare. I have listened to their stories about how higher costs and fewer choices have made it that much harder to keep their families healthy and make ends meet.

And in response, I made a promise—the same promise President Trump and every conservative in Congress has made over and over: Give us the majority in the House and the Senate, give us a Republican in the White House,

and we will repeal ObamaCare and replace it with reforms that work.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we are finally in a position to deliver on that promise. The voters gave us what we asked of them, and it is only right that we keep our end of the bargain.

With the American Health Care Act, we begin the process of repealing ObamaCare once and for all. This bill dismantles the taxes, mandates, and entitlement spending that make up the core of ObamaCare. It cuts taxes on prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, insurance premiums, and medical devices. It eliminates the individual and employer mandate penalties that have forced millions into expensive, inadequate plans. It replaces the ObamaCare entitlement with refundable tax credits so that people who don't receive insurance through work can put their own tax dollars toward a health plan of their choice.

Mr. Speaker, many people have asked why our plan to repeal and replace ObamaCare is a process. Why is this bill only one step and not the full package? It is an understandable question. For the last several years, Americans have been sold the false hope that government has a magic wand with which they can solve all of their problems. The truth is, of course, that it can't. It never can. And the only proof you need is ObamaCare itself.

That is why congressional Republicans and the Trump administration are taking a completely different approach than President Obama and the Democrats used 7 years ago. Instead of claiming we need to pass the bill so you can find out what is in it, we have worked in a transparent way. The bill text has been posted online for 3 weeks. It has gone through three separate committee markups, and will come to the House floor in regular order.

Instead of one giant bill like ObamaCare, we are using a more responsible, three-step process. First, we will repeal ObamaCare with all its taxes, mandates, and spending through budget reconciliation. Next, the Trump administration will use executive authority to weed out the more intricate ObamaCare policies one by one to stabilize the market and lower costs. And finally, Congress will move forward with legislation addressing more specific policies, such as allowing individuals to purchase insurance across State lines.

I believe this will ultimately lead to better, more stable healthcare policy that empowers patients, increases choices, and lowers costs.

Mr. Speaker, no bill is perfect. I am sure if every Member of this body came up with their ideal health reform bill, they would each be pretty different. It is supposed to be that way, because we all represent different districts in different parts of the country with different needs.

There may well be some changes made here in the House or in the Sen-

ate that can make the bill better. That is part of the process, so I certainly remain open to those.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am confident this bill puts us on a path toward lower cost and better care, and away from government-controlled health insurance. It represents our opportunity to undo the damage of ObamaCare and help American families like we said we would.

For 7 years, we have been promising, and this is our chance to deliver.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the American Health Care Act and send it to the Senate, and get us one step closer to delivering on our promise.

□ 1030

LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE CONCERNING THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the American Health Care Act, or TrumpCare, does one simple thing: This shortsighted Republican plan forces Americans to pay more to get less. It is nothing more than a tax break for the wealthiest at the expense of the most vulnerable.

Today, joining every major responsible group for providing health care to Americans—including the American Hospital Association, the AARP, the National Physicians Alliance, the American Medical Association, the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, and the National Nurses United—a group representing over 150,000 registered nurses wrote to Congress urging us to oppose the American Health Care Act.

Registered nurses care for Americans in our most difficult hours. From our first breath of life to our final, nurses are integral to the delivery of health care in our country. More than any other profession, nurses see the personal effects of a flawed healthcare system in the hospital every single day.

I know, Mr. Speaker, because I was the first former registered nurse in the House. I have a firsthand, valuable perspective and insight that nurses have into our healthcare system. We should take their heed alongside the public outcry about the danger of this so-called replacement bill.

These are not paid protesters going to townhall meetings across this country. These are our constituents, participating democratically, telling their Representatives that they want to keep and improve the current law, not repeal and replace.

This proposed plan replaces nothing for the 24 million Americans who would lose coverage as a result of this ill-derived legislation.

In my district alone, President Obama's Affordable Care Act brought